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A Christmas Message  
to You

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With the New Year



Villa Faulkner Page





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To Seekers of the Life More Abundant





# A Christmas Message to You With the New Year

Villa Faulkner Page



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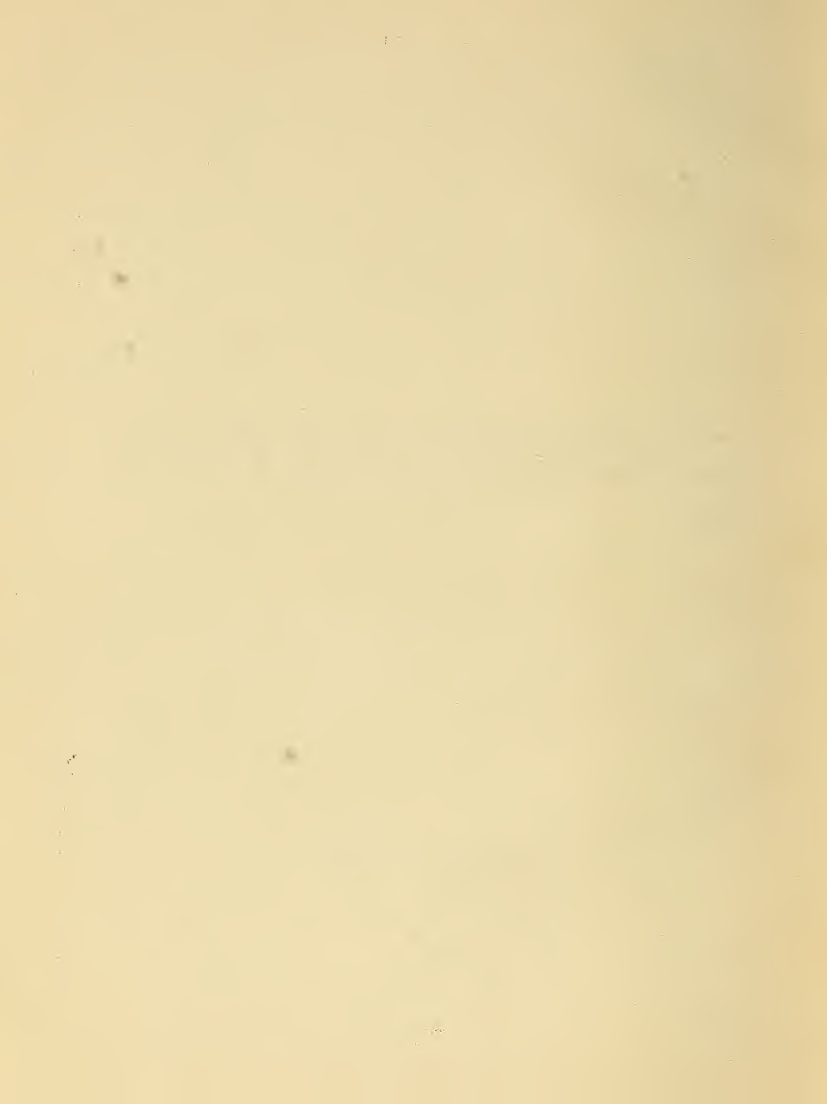
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“ For there is born to you this day in the  
city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the  
Lord.”



## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO YOU

“O Holy Night! The stars were brightly shining,  
It was the night of our dear Savior’s birth.  
Lone lay the world in sin and sorrow pining,  
Till He appeared and the Soul knew its worth.  
A thrill of joy the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder, see! The bright and guiding Star!  
‘Fall on your knees!’ Oh, hear the Angel voices,  
O Night Divine! O Night, when Christ was  
born.”

THE words fall lightly though perchance seriously. It is only from the lips of the one who knows—whose life has held the night upon which the Star rose—whose heart has been the cradle to which the Babe, the Christ Consciousness, came, that they fall with the thrilling cadence which betokens a realization.

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“For there is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”<sup>1</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased,”<sup>2</sup> chimes grandly the chorus of voices, not alone in the ears of the Shepherds, but of all Earth’s Sons.

Truly, glory and praise and thanksgiving! Peace and peace alone can follow when the heart’s song is thanksgiving.

“For there is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” I can but pause to marvel how we have read the words since that first Christmas morning when into our childish hearts the joy of the Year’s Glory crept,—the unspeakable joy of the mystery, the accession of love and peace, which filled the household. I am thinking how, as the years brought to us their

<sup>1</sup> Luke 2-11. A. S. E.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 2-14. A. S. E.

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burdens and happiness, we still read them—the burdens all unlifted, the happiness without augment because of any hidden meaning in them.

(So have our acres of diamonds crowded to our threshold. So have the jewels hung quivering with light above our uncrowned heads. So have our lips dropped all unknowingly priceless treasures of speech. We knew it not! We knew it not!)

To-night we are sitting by a fire bright as never burned a fire before; the untold throes of soul travail forgotten, in our hearts a great rest and peace for there is cradled the Christ! born to us—to you and me—Dear Heart.

To you! You sit and wonder. To you! Others have made larger claims. You perhaps have hung back timidly while those bolder, more insistent, have translated the “you” into its personal meaning, and so have found earlier than you,

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maybe, the great secret of Creation, viz., that save as it means you, you, out of all the myriads of created life forms, the whole plan of Creation is a failure. It is only one of the multiple phases of evolution, Dear One, by which we are held in the belief that we are huddled in masses—if at all—into the Kingdom. “The Great Spirit of Life can never be taxed with care for you or me”—we say—“units in the throng of life.”—“Not a sparrow falls to the ground”—“Yes, yes! That’s a sparrow, you see, a sparrow. That’s not I.”

The entire plan of the Word from lid to lid is to show the evolution of the Individual. Indeed, the whole Book of Nature teaches the Infinite’s care for the Individual. Is not one flower as beautiful as another? Lacks the wild rose one iota of delicacy or breath of perfume because it grows unseen? Is the plumage of the birds in forest depths untrod by



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man less beautiful? Rather, the greatest perfection of color or liquid sweetness of note is found therein. Seen or unseen the infinite lavishness of detail—the care for each species, for each individual of that species, is everywhere visible. No matter how small the form, Infinity's law holds. "Be ye perfect," is the keynote of God's work, "even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." The perfect whole must have perfect parts. The conclusion is inevitable. And so there is born to you, to YOU, this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

This Day! And for this day were you created. This it was in the heart of God for you in the dim, dreaming past of your life, aye, in the very beginning when God thought of you and you were,—when God loved the image of you and so you took form. There was first the "natural man," ("There is first the natural man," says Paul, "and then the spir-

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itual.") the man who as the creature of instincts and impulses grew and waxed perfect of his kind. You knew not in those days—"child of nature" that you were—that you had any save a very remote relation to God the Father. "Oh, yes! God made the world and all that is therein." Parrot-like you recited the words, and parrot-like—knew it not. You were happy *as* "a child of nature." You followed the desires of your heart and, according to law, grew.

Perhaps you recall now the days of a childhood when there was a spontaneous, free life—no repression of whatsoever kind. If you loved you declared it. If you hated you said so, and the blow followed the word. You quarreled and made up. There were no questions asked of Fate. It was the simple, natural life. Simple because the complexities caused by the shams of later life were wanting. There was only one life within, without,

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so you were glad and you laughed. You sorrowed and you wept. It was later that you learned to hide the joy in your heart because some one might envy you. It was in after years you learned—sorrow-taught—to smile and speak brave words with aching heart. Later it was that you queried why and how of a Fate which gave back no word;—that you sought in vain an answer from a Spirit which, you were told, was foreign to you, for “you were conceived in sin and shame—a creature vile and lost—an outcast—a pauper.” You could not know, Dear Heart There were centuries of race-thoughts and fear-thoughts back of you. Those who taught you gave as they were taught, and as they had fared, so they fed you—on stones instead of loaves. Or, perhaps, as a little child—old in soul—you too questioned, beat your little head upon the ground because, baby though you were, you could not know the why

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of your nature, and so you feared and hated it. The purely animal was giving way to the mental. The intellect had not reached the point of knowing. That is the Wilderness, Beloved, we have been wandering through. One taste from the Tree of Knowing that was not knowing—and the gate of Eden was closed. Made in the image of God, and knowing it not. One with God, and knowing it not. A part of Divine Consciousness, and knowing it not. Knowing nothing of God, Man or the Universe, and in the light of the insufficient interpretation you were able to put upon life, what wonder you stumbled and fell? What wonder, in the conflict of your Jungle Ancestry with the God-to-be within you, you were maddened, frenzied? All unversed, how could you know that the subtle reasoning of the whispering voice in your ear was the reasoning of an imp of Darkness in the garb of an Angel of Light, or

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that the demon you thought it to be within you and to which you gave battle (as did Quixote the windmills) was really an Angel of Light seeking to redeem you. Ah, you did not know, Dear Heart! How could you? There was no one to tell you, and in the infernal din of the warring within, you could not catch the voice which said, "Be still and know that I am God." You were made in the image of God but you did not know it. Your awakening mind barred for you the way to the merely, unquestioning animal life of other days. God within had said, "Know thyself." Unrest, discontent, question, wonder, dismay. Now up on the hilltop where a glimpse of fair lands beyond blessed your sight and stilled your heart. Then the path bent downward—forever—you thought. And (yes, I know) you did not want to live any longer. You tried not to, perhaps. But you know most of us say that, one time or

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another, and many of us foolishly try not to, some time or another. That does not signify—you forget that folly now as you sit here—the Christ Babe in the cradle of your heart breathing softly. It was only that you were apart from God and were homesick and knew not the cause or nature of your malady. There was only one possible remedy for it all. Little by little as days, months, years, went by, the occasional rifts widened. You knew then that whatever else may be God Is and loves you. Knew that the Great Spirit of life is really and truly your source—that the God is within you—that the “I and the Father are one” may be spoken by your soul as well as by the soul of the Man of Nazareth. You knew that the Divine Consciousness had entered your intelligence. It had permeated you always but you knew not its presence in your Soul. Not till to-day was the birth complete.



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You have felt so separated all these years—separated from Life. It might be that the great Feast of Life was spread in lofty halls but you were not a guest. “The Father’s Home”? What had you, an alien, stranger, outcast, to do with “Home”!—And all the while the doors were swinging wide and the face looking out into your night was gentle and loving; but with bitterness and rebellion in your heart because, having been given a taste for royal purple you were yet in rags, you saw not. Now in your own intelligence you know how God, though universal, yet individualizes in you;—that all those divine attributes of life and beauty are within you—that you are to attain one day their perfection in your personality. (“Be ye also perfect \* \* \* \* .”) As the Christ Child stirs in your heart to-night, you know how God the Father has become a closely personal friend in your life. You feel the

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beauty of the oneness with Him. Your whole being quivers with the joy of it. In the City of David! The City of your Being, Beloved, now that you know the Divine personal nature of God The Infinite.

“For there is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

It really seems the most impossible of all—this personal relation which has come between you and God. You recall how it has always seemed before, that so incomparably wonderful a thing as Infinity could have very little relation with individual forms. The old mystery so long pondered. It seems so simple now. The Expression seems so naturally linked with the Expressor. You wonder how any possible system of belief could have so hidden the truth. God the Sole Creator. Then everything that is is made by and through Him. That means you and



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me. And He must therefore be in His own work. That also means you and me. You draw a long breath. Oh, the blessedness of knowing that you—YOU have found out that God delights in you personally—loves to dwell in just the you you are. “There is So and So”—you say—“who has already the bearing of a King. Any maker might be proud of such a masterpiece—might love to hover fondly over his perfect form, delight in his glorious mind—joy in his great soul! Or So and So with her Madonna face—her whole being like an outbreathed prayer. These seem truly Temples of God; but I!”—Well, the best proof of its possibility is that it is so. What else can signify that voice in your ear, “O Child, greatly beloved, fear not”? Or that soft touch of the Christ in your consciousness that thrills you so? Oh, that cradle is a sacred place! The curious who may come to gaze on the wonder

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too eagerly, to question, to doubt,—they must be excluded for a time till this Holy Night has passed.

This, then, is what is meant. “In the City of David” means only that in knowing how the God-love is for you—even as the Christ knew His Sonship—there has been established a personal relation between you and the Mighty Source of Life,—and you have become, as the name David signifies, Beloved. The City of your Consciousness has become the City of David.

It was the years-long unfoldment of your consciousness, this preparation by which you became worthy of the name Beloved, that made possible this marvelous birth. Now the warring ceases. The Holiness of God (His Wholeness) seems so comprehensible with the coming of this new spiritual life. The enigma is solved. Whole! Every element of nature united with its fellows. A use for

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all of body, mind, emotion, soul. All beautiful—holy. No more query. No more hating of self. Christ, the master of all, born in your consciousness this night—now takes the helm. Control, self-direction, fullness of power, in all this splendid work of creation. “The body of an animal, the heart of a child, the mind of a man, the soul of a woman, the consciousness of a God.” This means the perfect man or woman. The crowning work of God in man’s creation is realized in your wholeness—the Holiness of God. (“‘Fall on your knees!’ Oh, hear the Angel voices. O Night Divine, O Night, when Christ was born!”)

“For there is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” A Savior! Saved from what?—From all these elements of your consciousness that are not the best. It has been—it will be—a difficult matter to know always that from which one is to be “saved.” It will be, generally

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speaking, the negative elements, the beliefs in the power or right to control, of those things which have made you unhappy. You do not just now see how it all is or can be, life has been such a mystery. But wait till the Christ Child waxes strong and He will make it all possible. You see we have lost sight of the fact that many of the things we have termed essential are really non-essential, so we have spent a vast amount of energy in meeting them as though they were giants instead of shadows. I presume that will be yet for some time a thing to cause us thought—perchance vexation of soul. But one learns how to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials—between primary and secondary matters. Is it an affair beyond your power? Then surely it does not concern you. Can it really injure you? If not, it truly does not matter. The power to injure you—to retard your real progress

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lies solely within yourself. Yes, Dear Heart, it is another of the things we have to learn and learn by the living. It is so natural to say—"If I only had this, I could be happy." And then after days have gone by and have given all that you asked, you cry, "Where can I find happiness that will last?" Forlorn as it seems this is really a state to be desired, however much one may protest at first. It is only when shorn of every aid that one really strikes out bravely for himself. And I take it that such is Life's method of dealing with us, and of showing us where our real happiness rests. The makeshifts to which we resort! not knowing that those things alone are "essentials" which are not to be touched by time or place or circumstance. Learning this we learn to live serenely. If it rains, what matters it? If it snows, why, what matter? If a seeming misfortune comes, why, what matters it? Rather

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give thanks for the power of endurance in yourself and to the love which opens a door for you.

So the larger life comes to you—the life more abundant, for the bringing of which, in the awakening of your consciousness and mine and the world's, was He, the Man of Nazareth given.

It all resolves itself into a matter of giving—this affair of “being saved.” You see we have been taught to associate the thought of giving with that of sacrifice—the Shibboleth of all religions. So the idea of sacrifice has wrapped itself about that perfect Son of God—and the real issue has been lost sight of just because as yet the world has not known the true lesson of sacrifice. Sacrifice is always a painful matter, say the untaught—a giving that must necessitate loss. Rather it is painful only as it is unwilling. You extend your hand with a rose to your friend. If your hand closes on



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the rose—unwilling to release it—the thorns pierce your hand. Open it wide and it is lifted with no pain. Do you not see how in all this splendid life of organization running through nature the smaller gives its life for the next higher form? Not sacrifice but a glad giving. A mother and child sat opposite me to-night in a crowded subway train. The mother's face was beautiful—faithful. The girl so like yet so unlike. The image in that mother-face, bereft now of its fresh color and fair outline, so stamped on the fair, flower-like face of the child. You could hardly say in what feature it was. It was a cast—a breath. Looking into the mother's face you saw there that which had passed to the child's. You saw and felt in the fond look and touch of the mother the joy with which that fair, imaged self in her had been transferred to live again in the fair child. Sacrifice? Yes, if by sacri-

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fice you mean a great joy in being lost in yet another and a fairer form. Sacrifice? Yes, such as the brave little leaves make when drifting earthward they lay down their load of mineral wealth gathered through long days and nights of shining and softness,—days of beating, insistent, loving sunlight—nights of brooding, enfolding silence;—lay it all down to pass into Earth's great storehouse of life, to reappear in another year's glory of leaf-age. Lay it down as drops the rose her petals to come forth in to-morrow's richer bloom. Yield it up as does the sun its light and heat and life to reappear in myriad forms of life. As yields each separate voice of nature its harmony to swell the Chorus of the Choirs Invisible. So do you, as the Christ Child in your life grows, yield up the lesser that the greater may appear. Give up the pleasure which would minister to the lower self that the higher may wax strong. For in-



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stance you leave a comfortable chair—you carry a parcel—you relinquish your car seat—you bestow the cup of loving service—all in the name of this Manger Child now cradled in your consciousness. The desire whose fulfillment promises great joy you brush aside for the sake of the weaker soul who would stumble therefrom,—you relinquish it because it bars the way to a nobler desire's fulfillment in yourself. You learn how to choose as this Holy Night Consciousness grows. The sacrifice is a glad giving that makes always for more and more life in all you contact.

“I am come,” breathes the Child in your soul, “that ye may have life and have it more abundantly.” Surely in this speaks the voice of God, whose presence alone can give life. Christ is the Lord God of all the Life that is. The Child is become the Savior, the Giver of Life, and Life is from God alone.

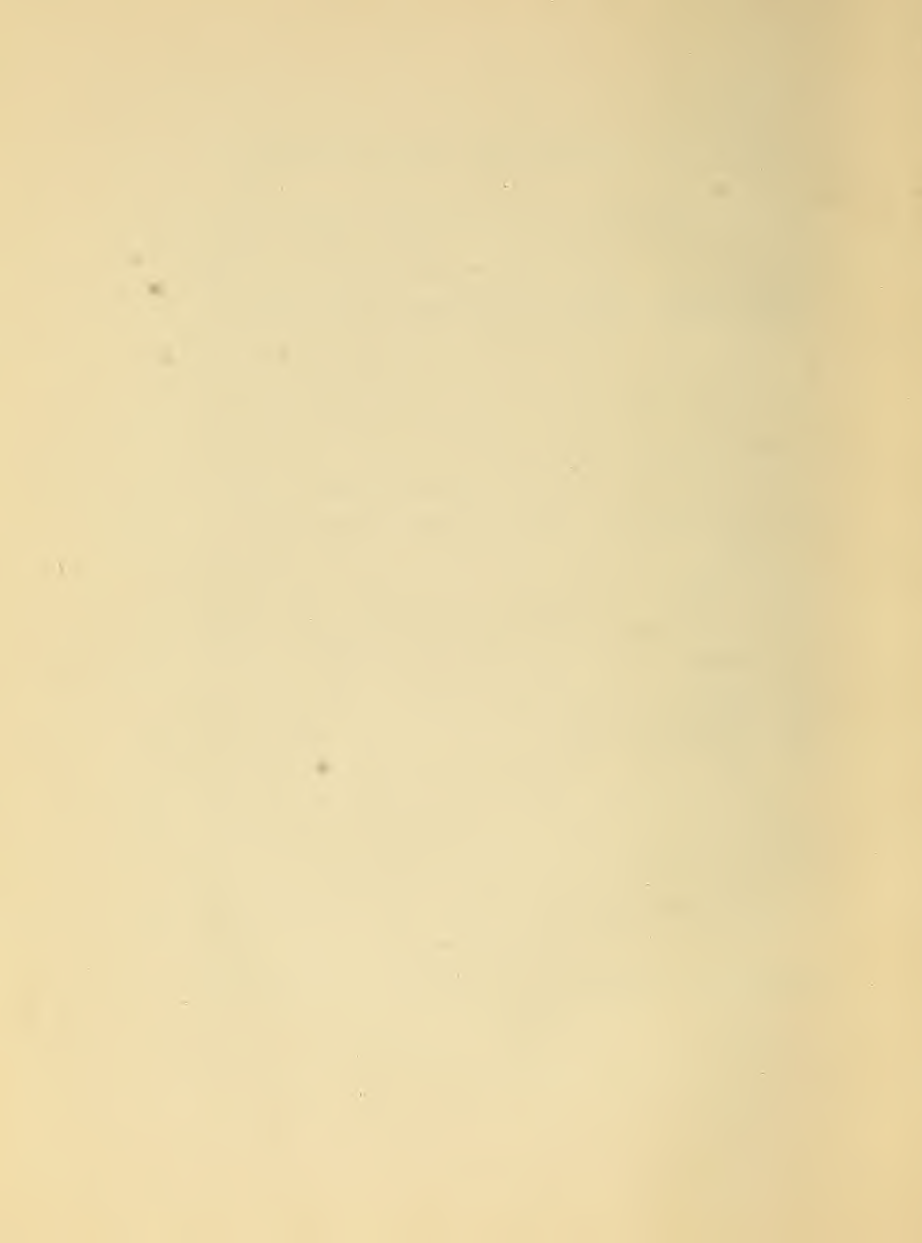
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So does it all knit itself together—so it is all made clear. In the Child you see the Loving Father of Life. (O Heart of Love, so, often, have you turned your head to look into the face of the Father-God standing at your side, and lo! you saw the face of your Beloved! Through those we love God's face shines out—God's voice sounds clear.)

“There is born to you this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!” O Heart of mine! draw close your brooding love about this Holy Child. Before this hour—you have been starved for love. Now pour it out and find the joy of its return!—for Life and Love are born to-night. Bid the old Manger Chorus swell grandly out—“Peace on earth among the men in whom He is well pleased”—and still bid them sing softly for the Babe but breathes as yet. Oh, Holy Night!  
(O Life! O Love! O Christ! O God!)

# With the New Year

“ I go to prove my soul !  
I see my way as birds their trackless way.  
I shall arrive ! What time, what circuit  
first,  
I ask not.  
In some time, His good time, I shall  
arrive !  
He guides me and the bird,  
In His good time ! ”



## WITH THE NEW YEAR.

So the year has passed! Seed time and harvest. The Promise, the Fruition. Glorious days of springing life,—bud, blossom, fragrance. Days of intoxicating shining and joy. The cup of Life's wine full-foaming. Dreams, hints of ecstasy undreamed. Life, Life, Life!

Summer days! long and full. The promise fulfilling, life taking on material vesture. Days of unfolding splendor,—nights cool and dreaming. Shine of moon and stars—love, adoration. God walking through the cloisters of the Soul!

Now the fullness of life—The dreams coming true. The grains garnered, the harvest past, the cycle full. The God of promise, of shaping life, of abundance, of realization, in it all.

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And the New Year.

We never outgrow the sentiment attached to the coming of the New Year. Did I say sentiment? Surely unless with its inner meaning of beauty, the word is not well used; for the emotions, with the best of the mind's powers, which meet in sentiment are those that spring from the "inner knowledge" for which we have no adequate expression.

It is always a death and a life—the two great mysteries of Being. Two? Rather one, and that the Mystery of Life. It is the ever-recurring question until that day of the Christ birth in us and then we know that all is Life, and death but an instant in the great process of Becoming; for

"The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar."

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No matter what death we die or lives we live,—no matter if we come from a previous earth life or from a Star undreamed;—no matter if the twelve months passed be sad or joyful, we—all untaught by Conscious Mind—drop both alike and reach out for the new, seizing its fresh-made promises—clasping its new-offered flowers. Death loses its terror for so softly does the life enfold it they become one in the blending. No shock—no change. A passing that is not seen, a transition unfelt, a life that “so sweetly ceased to be it lapsed in Immortality.” Can you tell where one wave ends and another begins? As well say then which is life or death.

Surely it is the inner wisdom and that alone that makes us always to look to the just-opening door—welcoming the new, new life. The Soul’s search for God finds expression here. It puts gently aside the barriers made by life’s claims.

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On! On! Or it beats with insistent hands upon the Future's door. More life, wider outlook, greater difficulties in problems, more responsibilities. We wonder why. "I've only gotten out of one hard place to fall into another," we lament. It is only our Soul's search for God—and we are Becoming.

It is the coming repeatedly around to things we thought done up and put away yesterday; meeting to-day the temptation we told ourselves we had vanquished yesterday. "Why must it forever show its face," we demand impatiently, despairingly. It was a hard struggle, maybe, to meet and master that situation—and with swelling pride when the struggle was ended, the fever of anger or dismay or self-pity, cooled, we said, "I certainly am developing." And lo! The next day or week or month brings back the same problem—possibly in a similar guise, possibly in a different one. Why? It is



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the process of Becoming, in the Soul's search for life.

I wonder if you recall how, as a child, you learned the puzzling contents of your Arithmetic. There came a day when you could write, perhaps after diligent practice, let us say, two thousand three hundred forty-six, and write it perfectly. One awful day a command came: "Write twenty-three hundred forty-six"! Oh! The consternation! The dismay! And in how many, many different ways had each item learned to be stated! If you knew certain problems — remembered just how or when to multiply or divide or add—the agony when there appeared on the weekly test not the same but different problems, requiring the application of the same principle, maybe, but such a totally new combination of conditions. You marvelled so at the cruelty of a teacher who could thus basely betray your trust, in the perpetration of such a

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deed. Day after day appeared the varying relations of the elements. There were given Base and Rate to find Percentage, Amount and Difference; or Difference and Amount, to find Base, Rate and Percentage—and so on through the thirty combinations and problems made possible by the machinations of some mind of Awful Genius! And even when you were pronounced “Finished” in Arithmetic, was it not that only in after years you learned the real meaning—the simple beauty of the quondam complexities?

I have always a deep sympathy with and for the bewildered little minds of children. I recall a young teacher—a fine, earnest young man, receiving his professional training, who taught faithfully one day this simple statement: “I and O are capital letters.” Imagine his dismay when the class reproduced the lesson as follows: “I know, are capital let-

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ters." I wonder now how a teacher can scold or punish children who do not know because of bewilderment of mind. Honestly now, how well do you and I know our Combinations and Problems in the ordinary lessons of life? Perhaps we have been out of the purely mental student life long enough to have dimmed its memories, and recognize now that we were often, as teachers, impatient with a seeming stupidity which was in reality bewilderment of mind. We talk a foreign language to the "little ones" forgetting how that which is so plain to us—after years of effort—is meaningless and mysterious to them. They are bewildered as you or I would be if placed on a foreign shore with only natives and a strange language to help us. Who shall bridge the gulf between the ignorant and the knowing mind? Surely no one by thought processes alone. It is by contacting children, or the experiences, duties,

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sorrows, joys, life itself brings, that we develop its wisdom.

I heard it said in recent years concerning a wise, gentle woman of large experience in dealing with clouded lives, "She never spoke an impatient word to a bewildered mind." The thought goes home and does its work. Bewildered! That is true of us. We are long in learning to the point of comprehension. It is one thing, you see, to apprehend—quite another to comprehend. We may "lay hold of" in an apprehending—have a concept as it were—but years alone bring the fullness of comprehension. "Knowledge comes but wisdom lingers," says Emerson.

This, then, is the meaning in our lives of the continually recurring problems. Body, brain, emotions, soul, must in turn learn its habit of action—must Become. There is need of the physical exercise repeated day after day in the gymnasium

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that the muscles Become strong or able to move with that grace which is the ease of forgotten toil. There is need of the mental application in various lines that one Become able to memorize, to reason, to control and direct the imagination. There is need of the daily control of emotion or feeling that one may Become a self-mastered man or woman. There is need of abiding in the presence of the Divine Image that we may Become like it. So all along it is a process of Becoming, and the fullness of wisdom—Love's Twin—is the beautiful result.

The line, "We rise on the steps of our dead selves," had always for me a gruesome sound until I learned the secret of Nature's process of Becoming; and knew that as we pass at the movement of the clock from the Old Year to the New, so do we grow out of the old habit, the old pain, the old passion, the old desire. Be-

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coming a new man or woman in a day?  
Oh, no! after many days.

“ Still, as the spiral grew,  
He left the past year’s dwelling for the new,  
Stole with soft steps its shining archway through,  
Built up its idle door,  
Stretched in his last-found home,  
And knew the old no more.”

Nature’s great process of Becoming.

So it appears we must have all that life brings. We must have the same things to master day after day. Nature (who is also God) is so wise in her methods of teaching. There is never a flaw in the Plan of her Lesson or in its Development. The Questions she asks of us are direct, clear, definite. Her Illustrations are apt, her Applications true, her Review and Drill past criticism in their thoroughness. Her Manner of presentation is full of the quiet dignity of the teacher who is sure of her ground. It

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would seem wise on our part to trust ourselves to her teaching, knowing that by her law of attraction we are drawing to ourselves just the lessons we have need to learn;—but in our soul bewilderment we would fly from her. “I can’t do it”—the child says. “I don’t like Drawing, let me do History.” The wise teacher shows him how he can draw, and so teaches that he likes Drawing best of all. “I cannot live in this environment,” we say. “God has no right to put me in a place where I am subjected to this test. It’s not fair. Only let me have a chance—a fair chance, and I’ll show you what I can do.” Dear Heart, you know already how to do that you would choose, and do it well. You are Past Master in that art. Are we to stop forever on the same subject after becoming an adept in it? I expect we are just where we are because we need the teaching and experience to be gotten by *this* contacting and



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no other just now. What would you say to the pupil who was trying to slip out of a hard lesson? Would it not be after this fashion? "Face the work, my boy. Don't be faint hearted. Be a man. Put forth your effort and win!" Shall we be brave enough to take our own direction and say—"Face the thing troubling you. Take it firmly by the hand; look bravely into its parts." We never learn by running away, by endeavoring to close the book, by this makeshift or that, by seeking explanations always of others. One Teacher there is (who is also God) and it is His prerogative to teach. An assistant may help, may show us how wise is the Great Master and so help us to understand His methods. After that we go trustingly with Him. Moreover, each problem holds in itself its own law of solution. Ah, but we do not *want* to see it. It is the one thing we do not want to learn. We would let it pass by, it is



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so hard. Storms, hysteria, melancholia! "I'll die before I'll learn it!" And there is one key to the whole situation. Look now in your own hand, Comrade, and see if it be not there—the key of Love and Justice. "Love? I do love!"—Yes, but how? Grudgingly, hesitatingly, chillingly,—fitting our giving to *our* liking not to the need;—after the manner of so much Christmas giving—because one has it on hand and does not really need it oneself; or because the possession of the gift by some one else would add to our comfort. (You remember the wife who gave her husband at Christmas a large, handsome rug for the front hall, and paper for the dining room.) Or we love, always putting our love in the balance, so much love so much return; or so much question or condition. Does the great Giver so? Nay! His sunlight is for all. His rain on the loving and unloving; on the loving that they

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may increase their loving; on the unloving that they may learn to love, to be grateful and thankful.

This conclusion, Comrades, out of all life brings: The environment we have with all its problems big and little is the one we need just now; the one we have drawn to ourselves by the need we have shown our Teacher, and it will remain until we have mastered it. But oh, always and forever "Standeth God within the Shadow, keeping watch above His Own." Nor will He let us be tried beyond our strength to endure;—and always is heard the whisper of the Still Waters and we see the shimmer of the Green Pastures; and one fair day we learn to choose them always—learn so soon as we cease putting our will, our personal will, against the Law—the King's will. ("I take it that the only sin lies in putting the will of the part against that of the whole.")

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There is need perhaps that we hold  
in abeyance a power of leadership and  
learn that—

“No ruler can be great  
Unless he learns with dignity to be a Servitor.  
The least shall be the greatest,  
The most true in all things, howe'er small,  
Shall be at last most valiant.”

Or there is need to learn to give without  
weighing a return. Or to learn to fix  
firmly in our souls that which we seem  
to be and to seem what we really are.  
(“Knighthood is in the Spirit and the  
Soul, the deeds that show the Knight-  
hood to the world are but the chance and  
circumstance of fate.”) True it is that  
true growth is from within out, but in  
our hearts we at times assume that which  
we are not—speak out the word—brave  
and strong—our hearts belie, and so sor-  
row one day because “we had not the  
stock wherewith to make good.” “If

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you have assumed a character beyond your strength," says Epictetus, "you have both played a poor figure in that and neglected one that is within your strength." Or you—Dear Heart—who always view yourself with telescope reversed. 'Tis we who know your greatness, your worth. One day will you learn that because God dwells in you, you are worthy. Look now! and see your Sonship's garb.

Practice, practice, practice! Practice Justice and Love—Practice God in all His attributes.

"One, two, three; one, two, three; one, two, three," over and over the little one takes her dancing steps, or plays her scales. "Dear child," we say—"she is so faithful."

Shall we be less so in our practice?

I learned recently of a system of music by which in an incredibly short time its pupils play well. It aims to make each

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one an Artist by bringing his soul to his fingers, (only an Artist does that, you know) and is based on a fine power of thought concentration and application. It does away forever with mechanical, half-hearted work. One must be alive—and this the pupils are taught to be. It makes use of the natural joy of children for this purpose. Before they know they are doing the right things for love of it; and a power of tone production is secured that delights you in listening. In the "Grown-up" it calls up forgotten joy and uses it with unfailing results. Briefly it is to "Think and do"—not "Think and dawdle." "Stimulate the center and free the channels of expression," I read in other days.—I've learned what all this means: Seeing and doing, Perception and Will, Wisdom and Love, and there we are! In the very Throne Room of Deity.

"Life means something to B—" said

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a friend. "It makes him so different." Right perception, right estimate of values, right doing, and a *large willingness* to perceive, to estimate, to do, this makes life "mean something." No, I truly do not know how a life can mean anything which has not God in it. Until I have established for myself a faith in the unfailing Good, life is colorless, meaningless. "What's the use o' nothin'?" asked the pessimistic urchin—and straightway answered it, "Nothin's the use o' nothin'." How can it be worth anything unless there be an All-Good or God?

"Why aren't you singing, Willie?" asked the teacher. — "Don't wanter." "Why, don't you ever do anything unless you—'wanter'?" — "Naw; not unless I wanter."

The "wanter" may have to be born in us, according to law, out of fear, if Nature's whip and spur be our only teachers,



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(The fear of the Law is the beginning of wisdom.) so difficult is it to let go of that to which we cling by habit of thought or acquired desire.

If there be one injunction more than another I would lay upon my soul as the New Year dawns, it is this: "Let go."

I knew a little lad of four who met the Christmas season in the true spirit of a metaphysician. He cleared his little cupboard of all his old toys—no matter how dearly loved. In various ways they were disposed of so that when the generous gifts of the New Year came he was ready with clean, empty shelves. "And do you mean you would have me clear out all that the Past has left me? That were ingratitude."—We need never let go of anything, Dear Heart, that is constructive. It is only the memories of those things that hold us back or are so dividing our attention that we have not the power of putting the life—the spirit, into

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the act of the moment. "Forgetting those things that are behind"? "All the loves and victories and beauties, the 'griefs for dear ones?' Yes, and no. To sit always by a fireside however bright, becomes enervating, does it not? To linger always in the presence of the loves and victories and beauties—never so priceless, so noble, so rare—to dwell forever in the Lotus Land—why, answer the question yourself. Who will meet to-day's loves, win to-day's victories, enjoy to-day's beauties, if we are always to remain in the Sanctuaries of yesterday's? The things of yesterday have given us their inspiration, have they not? lent their charm? If they have given way to others, as the wheel turns on, why dream all day of them? The beauty and the love made strong your heart for the day, and that strength was used in your Becoming. The victory won, passed into the power that makes to-day's vic-



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tories possible. Why dream all day of them?

The sunshine and starshine, the brook's low ripple, the shadows on the grass under the maples or chasing away on the hillside, the robin that sang at twilight, the gathering in the home of the children, as the crisp Autumn nights crept on, the Mother drawing the blankets close about the little ones as winter wind whistled by, the Father's patient toil—Dear God! You catch the breath and choke the sob and brush aside the blinding tears that you may better look at the picture—drink once more its inspiration—then change the slide of life's camera! They gave their joy, their life. They were woven into the fabric. The loom clicked on. Why dream of them all day? It is a taste of old wine and its strength is not lost—we sip but sweetness. We poured out Life's libations, it is true, and maybe, lifted the empty chalice of our

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heart—but thank God, not empty forevermore. God fills it yet fuller and fuller. So long as there is God, the chalice may not be empty. The old griefs and errors? Away with them.

We have no use for these “back numbers of ourselves.” We put aside yesterday’s daily paper, last month’s magazine, why not last year’s edition of ourselves? No, it shall be a new and up-to-date issue. Fear of the future? Why if the Great Good has brought us thus far safely, why fear to go still farther even tho’ we may not see it all—even tho’ some of it lies yet for us “around the corner?”

“I go to prove my soul!  
I see my way as birds their trackless way.  
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,  
I ask not.  
In some time, His good time, I shall arrive!  
He guides me and the bird,  
In His good time!”

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So let it pass—the low-burning fire—the Day—the Year. All they had to give of warmth, of sunshine, of effort, of victory, of joy—they have given.

Close the door on them all. Through them we became more worthy to stand where the work is most pressing, the needs most clearly seen. We pick up the broken blade some one has cast aside, perhaps, or with fresh, shining weapons of the newer warfare of Peace and Good Will stand smiling, confident, faithful, to meet the New Year.

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